

REMARKS

Claims 1-33 were pending in the application. Claims 1, 9, 28, and 30 have been amended. Support for the amendments can be found, e.g., on page 4, lines 10-11 of the present application. (Applicants respectfully submit that disclosure of photon crystal fibers that “can be used to produce a continuous spectral distribution over the entire visible wavelength region” inherently discloses producing a continuous spectral distribution over a substantial portion of the entire visible wavelength range.) Claims 19-27 have been canceled, and new claims 34-36 have been added. Support for new claim 34 may be found, e.g., on page 2, lines 12-14. New claims 35 and 36 are similar to claims 34 and 1, respectively, without the means-plus-function language. Therefore, claims 1-18 and 28-36 are now pending in the present application. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the present application in view of the foregoing amendments and in view of the reasons that follow.

Prior Art Rejections

Claims 1-3, 5-7, 19, 20, 22, and 28-32 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,236,779 to Kafka et al. (hereinafter “Kafka”). Claims 4, 8, 23, 25-27, and 33 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kafka. Claims 9-11, 13, and 15-18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kafka in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,995,281 to Simon et al. (hereinafter “Simon”). Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections for at least the following reasons.

Claim 1 has been amended to recite that the optical component is configured to increase the wavelength range of the laser light to a substantial portion of the entire visible wavelength range. An advantage of this feature is that it “makes possible specimen examination with several spectral lines without requiring the use of multiple-line lasers or more than one laser.” (Page 2, lines 12-14 of the present application.) Kafka discloses a photonic crystal fiber system “to deliver low power sub-picosecond pulses without substantial pulse broadening...” (Col. 2, lines 10-30, emphasis added.) Further, Kafka discloses a Ti:sapphire laser having a wavelength of 800 nm and a bandwidth of 7 nm. “Nonlinear effects... will broaden the

bandwidth of the pulse. This distortion of the pulse is clearly undesirable for a sub-picosecond pulse delivery system.” (Emphasis added.) Thus, Kafka aims to minimize bandwidth broadening. Kafka does not teach, suggest, or disclose an optical component that is configured to increase the wavelength range of the laser light to a substantial portion of the entire visible wavelength range. Simon fails to cure the deficiencies of Kafka. Therefore, claim 1, and all claims dependent therefrom, are believed to be patentable over the cited references. Withdrawal of the rejections is respectfully requested.

Amended independent claims 9, 28, and 30 contain similar patentable limitations. Therefore, claims 9, 28, and 30, and all claims dependent therefrom, are believed to be patentable over the cited references. Withdrawal of the rejections is respectfully requested.

Applicants respectfully request that previously withdrawn claims 12 and 14 be examined and allowed because they depend from allowable claim 9.

New claims 34 and 35 recite that the optical component is configured to increase the wavelength range of the laser light to a range including at least two spectral lines that are characteristic of different laser types. Neither Kafka nor Simon teaches, suggests, or discloses this limitation. New claims 34 and 35 are believed to be patentable.

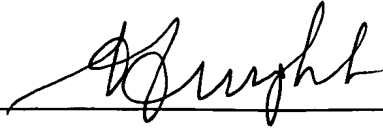
Conclusion

Applicants believe that the present application is in condition for allowance, and favorable reconsideration is requested.

The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone if it is felt that a telephone interview would advance the prosecution of the present application.

Respectfully submitted,

Date 12/1/03

By 

FOLEY & LARDNER
Customer Number: 22428

Andrew F. Knight
Agent for Applicant
Registration No. 50,443



22428

PATENT TRADEMARK OFFICE

Telephone: (202) 672-5300

Facsimile: (202) 672-5399

Should additional fees be necessary in connection with the filing of this paper, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge Deposit Account No. 19-0741 for any such fees.